

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
233 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader Pelosi, Chairman Ryan, and Ranking Member Levin:

As the House begins consideration of the Trade Act of 2015, we urge you to include a critical amendment that would specify the process by which Congress will approve new countries joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

This week, President Obama stated that the Chinese government has put out feelers to himself and multiple members of his cabinet about joining the TPP. These statements go beyond news reports that China is monitoring the talks very closely. Despite the threat of China joining in the near future, the Trade Act of 2015, is silent on how future countries would join the agreement.

Never before has a president negotiated a free trade agreement that is intended to expand to more countries in the future. In addition, agreements negotiated at the World Trade Organization do not require subsequent congressional approval before additional countries become party to them. Without inserting clear-cut instructions for expanding the TPP agreement, this Administration or the next could expand the TPP to include China or any other country without adequate congressional input.

We offered an amendment to the bill that would have spelled out the explicit role Congress should play in evaluating a potential TPP partner, approving negotiations with that partner, and applying fast track to those negotiations. Now that China has signaled its interest in joining the agreement at high levels of the U.S. government, it is even more imperative that our language be incorporated into the final bill. We urge you to include our amendment to ensure Congress has a clear and defined role in determining whether China should join the TPP.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Gary Peters  
United States Senator